



***Aboriginal news from across Turtle Island and beyond***  
**March 11-15, 2013**

**After 140 years and a review of 2000 volumes of documents,  
Métis win land claim**

[Globe and Mail](#)

Mar. 08 2013, 10:15 AM EST

Gloria Galloway



*File photo of Manitoba Métis Federation president David Chartrand with the Métis Infinity Flag.  
(Robert Tinker For The Globe and Mail)*

In a case that looks back to the time of Louis Riel and Sir John A. Macdonald, the Supreme Court has determined that the Government of Canada failed in its obligations to the Métis under the 1870 agreement that brought Manitoba into Confederation.

The decision opens the door to claims by the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) to 1.4 million acres of land, including Winnipeg and the surrounding area that is known as the Red River Settlement. The group collected more than 2,000 volumes of historical documents to back their assertion that they own the land because of promises contained in the Manitoba Act.

The MMF went to court to force negotiations around compensation for the territory that was promised in that document to the 7,000 Metis children but was never given to them, or was given and then purchased back for a pittance.

And the court, in a 6-2 ruling, agreed, finding that "the federal Crown failed to implement the land grant provision set out in (section) 31 of the Manitoba Act, 1870, in accordance with the honour of the Crown."

David Chartrand, the president of the MMF, said before the court's verdict was announced Friday morning that the important thing is to help the rest of Canada understand the injustices endured by his people.

This case has been the number one issue for the Métis, said Mr. Chartrand. "So I promised them that, no matter what happens, we will take this case to the highest court in the land, which is the Supreme Court, and seek justice," he said. "And, if not, we are going to tell our story."

In 1870, the Red River Settlement in Manitoba had 12,000 people, about 10,000 of whom were Métis – the descendants of white fur trader fathers and aboriginal mothers. When Confederation was being negotiated, the Metis wanted no part of it and rebelled against becoming part of Canada.

The court determined that Canada did not owe a fiduciary duty to the Métis but said the implementation of land grants was "ineffectual and inequitable. That was not a matter of occasional negligence, said the court, "but of repeated mistakes and inaction that persisted for more than a decade."

A government intent on fulfilling its duty "could and should have done better," said the court which also dismissed government arguments that the claimants were too late in making their case and that the matter should have been brought before the courts in the 1800s.

Queen Victoria demanded that the uprising be settled before she would allow the land to be transferred to Canada. So Riel and Macdonald hammered out the agreement that set aside the land, which was located along the Red, Assiniboine and other rivers, for the Métis children.

But Métis say that, because of lengthy delays and inopportune governmental decisions, about 6,000 of the children got disparate plots scattered about the province far from parents and siblings, the other thousand got nothing, and Manitoba passed laws that were designed to pass the land from Métis to non- Métis ownership.

The MMF has been fighting for more than 40 years and spend more than \$5-million to be compensated for the loss.

The matter went through the trial courts and Manitoba Court of Appeal three times on different points of law. In the most recent decision, the Métis lost a 5-0 ruling.

## **First Nations protest education act change**

[StarPhoenix](#)

March 9, 2013

Charlene Tebbutt

More than 300 people walked in protest in Prince Albert to voice their objection to a plan by the federal government to legislate education on First Nations reserves in Canada.

The group, including elders, community leaders and young students from First Nations communities around Prince Albert, marched Friday along Marquis Road on the south side of the city to the local Aboriginal Affairs office in the John E. MacDonald Memorial Building to protest the First Nation Education Act. The act, which is scheduled to be implemented in the fall of 2014, focuses on improving education and graduation rates among First Nation students throughout the country. The proposed act includes mandatory education standards for all First Nations schools in areas such as attendance and diploma requirements, the federal government said of the proposal. The act would be similar to current education requirements for other schools at the provincial level.

The federal government is doing consultations on the proposed act. But, Pauline McKay, who organized Friday's march, said it will not help First Nations students get a better education. McKay, the director of education and principal at Sturgeon Lake Central School near Prince Albert, said First Nations education should be better funded and students should be able to learn about their culture and history.

"We have the highest dropout rate in Canada, we live in poverty ... our prisons are just full of our young people, and why? Because we lack an education," McKay said Friday.

"We don't have equal education on reserves. We don't have the equal funding, our children are worth less than other children in the province (and) we just want a fair education for our students."

McKay said First Nations schools follow provincial curriculum guidelines, but a lack of funding has hindered the quality of education students receive. A teacher for 34 years, McKay said First Nations schools are "always teaching without."

"We want our students to be doctors, we want them to be in the medical field because there's a shortage there, we want them to be in the science field because there's a shortage there and yet I can only afford one math teacher that has to teach all the math and sciences," she added.

"That document (First Nation Education Act) doesn't provide for any of those things ... there's nothing concrete in that document at all."

## Defining Moments in Inuit Art veers far from the predictable: A Winnipeg gallery is betting heavily on Inuit art that goes beyond gift-shop clichés

[MacLean's](#)

March 11, 2013 8:00am

John Geddes



*Leif Norman*

Mention Inuit art and a smooth stone carving springs to mind, or a colourful Cape Dorset print, maybe Kenojuak Ashevak's iconic owl. No Canadian art is more widely appreciated, or more susceptible to being reduced to gift-shop clichés. The Winnipeg Art Gallery's ambitious current show, [Creation and Transformation: Defining Moments in Inuit Art](#), offers pieces that will satisfy popular expectations, like Osuitok Ipeelee's elegant marble polar bear from 1975, its torso torqued just so and nose raised to sniff a cold breeze. But much of the art—especially recent work like Ningeokuluk Teevee's pencil-and-ink tattooed woman with a cigarette, or Andrew Qappik's drypoint self-portrait in his printshop—veers far from the predictable. "I'm anxious to destroy the stereotypes with my shows," says Darlene Coward Wight, the gallery's longtime Inuit art curator.

She's not alone. Curators in recent years have taken pains to avoid the old, condescending view of indigenous art as folkloric. It's no longer segregated. For instance, the [National Gallery of Canada](#)'s recent biennial show of newly acquired Canadian art displayed Inuit pieces, such as Elisapee Ishulutaq's mural-sized drawing of traditional life in Nunavut, alongside works created in the hipper neighbourhoods of southern cities. Still, the Ottawa institution's ambitious summer 2013 show, called [Sakahan](#)—"to light a fire" in Algonquin—will invite gallery-goers to see contemporary indigenous art as a distinct category, by grouping work by Aboriginal artists from Canada with their indigenous peers from around the world.

The question of how to collect and exhibit indigenous art has vexed major Canadian art institutions for decades. As the focus shifted from anthropology museums to

fine-art galleries, aesthetic judgments pushed aside the old emphasis on cultural context—but never entirely. Nowhere is finding the right balance a more urgent preoccupation than the Winnipeg Art Gallery, where more than 12,000 Inuit pieces form the backbone of the permanent collection. “There’s a social side to [Inuit art], historical, anthropological, religious and spiritual—and now art for the sake of art,” says WAG executive director Stephen Borys. “It has evolved at times very differently than other art, and we have to look at it differently.”

The WAG is betting heavily on Inuit art’s enduring appeal. Last fall, it chose Los Angeles-based Michael Maltzan as the architect for a new \$35-million Inuit Art and Learning Center. Construction beside the WAG’s landmark main building (a striking modernist triangle from 1971 by Gustavo da Roza) is set to begin next year, with 2016 as the target for completion. The centre’s heart, Borys says, will be a showcase glass vault for Inuit sculpture going back to the 1950s, when it was first appearing in southern markets. In that early period, the main buyer of the carvings was the Hudson’s Bay Company, then headquartered in Winnipeg.

That local link led the WAG to begin collecting early, putting it in a unique position now to survey more than a half-century of change. The pieces Coward Wight chose for Creation and Transformation, which is slated to run to April 14, couldn’t be more varied, from the refined minimalism of John Pangnark’s 1969 stone carving [Mother and Child](#), to the almost unhinged quality of some later ivory-and-bone sculptures—Coward Wight calls them “expressionist”—like Nelson Takkirup’s 1989 [Double Shaman Drum Dancer](#).

She bristles at the suggestion that crowds are drawn to this art to a great degree out of curiosity about a way of life that is at once exotic and quintessentially Canadian. “The focus,” Coward Wight says, “is the artist and not the culture.” As a curator’s code, it’s beyond reproach. Yet this is artwork inextricably tied to a particular people in a particular setting. In fact, Borys says a key goal for the WAG’s new Inuit centre is that every Manitoba elementary school kid’s first impression of the Far North should come, not from a classroom map or a textbook description, but through an up-close, field-trip encounter with an unforgettable work of art.

## **Federal response to aboriginal corrections report 'dismissive': CSC rejects recommendation to appoint a deputy commissioner for aboriginal corrections**

[CBC News](#)

Mar 9, 2013 7:03 AM ET

Susana Mas

*Howard Sapers, Canada's prison watchdog, says the Correctional Service of Canada was 'very dismissive' in its response to a report calling attention to the dramatic increase of*



*Canada's Aboriginal Peoples in federal prison. (Sean Kilpatrick/The Canadian Press)*

The Correctional Service of Canada was "very dismissive" in its response to a report sounding the alarm to the dramatic increase of Aboriginal Peoples in federal prison, tabled in Parliament this week, Canada's prison watchdog says.

In an interview airing Saturday on CBC Radio's The House, Howard Sapers, the correctional investigator for Canada, told host Evan Solomon he was "hopeful" he would receive a "fulsome response" that would deal directly with the recommendations he made in the report.

Instead, "what I found is that it's very dismissive. It in no way addresses the urgency of the situation," Sapers said.

The report found there was nearly a 40 per cent increase in the incarcerated aboriginal population between 2001-02 and 2010-11.

While Aboriginal Peoples comprise just four per cent of Canada's population, they make up 23 per cent of the nation's federal prison inmate population, the report found. In other words, the report shows, nearly one in four prison inmates is Métis, Inuit or First Nations.

"If you read through CSC's response you're left with the impression that there's not really much of a problem and whatever issues there may be, they are dealing with [them]," Sapers said.

The report, tabled in the House of Commons Thursday morning, is only the second special report written by the investigator since the office's creation 40 years ago.

Sapers said he submitted the report to CSC last October but did not receive a response until late Thursday evening. Despite "the long delay," Sapers said, he did not find CSC's response to be "a thoughtful or complete response."

10 recommendations

The report calls on corrections officials to implement a list of 10 specific recommendations to address the vast over-representation of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada's federal prison.

In its response, the CSC maintains it is "dedicated to continuing to address the needs of aboriginal offenders in the federal correctional system and to ensuring that they can work toward rehabilitation in an inclusive and culturally sensitive environment."

But according to Sapers, "each and every one of the recommendations is either disagreed with or the response is simply to reinforce what the CSC is already doing."

'The creation of an additional Deputy Commissioner position would add unnecessary bureaucracy and cost to the current governance structure'— The Correctional Service of Canada

One of the report's main recommendation calls on the CSC to appoint a deputy commissioner for aboriginal corrections.

In its response, the CSC said "the creation of an additional Deputy Commissioner position would add unnecessary bureaucracy and cost to the current governance structure."

"The CSC has invested resources in more direct frontline operational programs and interventions designed to maximize the capacity of the field, regions, and sectors to collectively address the various challenges of Aboriginal corrections."

According to Sapers, the CSC's response does not meet the urgency of the matter.

"One of the reasons why we brought it to the attention of Parliament in a special report is because there is an urgent need for change," Sapers said. "The status quo is failing us."

'Disappointing' answers

The prison watchdog said he will raise the matter directly with Don Head, the commissioner of the Correctional Service of Canada, but that given their response, he will also bring this to the attention of the minister in charge in the coming days.

On Thursday, a spokesperson for Public Safety Minister Vic Toews did not address the recommendations included in Sapers's report, but said "the only identifiable group that our tough on crime agenda targets are criminals."

"Aboriginal Canadians are more likely to be victims of crime. We are taking action to ensure that all Canadian communities are protected," the spokesperson said in a written statement.

While Toews did not answer any questions about the report during question period on Thursday, Justice Minister Rob Nicholson and Prime Minister Stephen Harper echoed those remarks.

"It is important to note that prisoners are people who have been found guilty of criminal offences by independent court," Harper said.

"The reality is that, unfortunately, Aboriginal People are more likely to be the victims of violent crime than other Canadians. That is why, among other measures, we are



taking our responsibility to protect Canadian society seriously," Harper told the Commons.

Opposition Leader Tom Mulcair said the prime minister's response was "one of the most disappointing" things he's ever heard from Harper.

"It's not alright, in a free and democratic society, to have that sort of disproportionate number of people from one community in prison," Mulcair told reporters after question period.

Getting to the source of the problem will require "a little bit of understanding and some sympathy," something the NDP leader said was "sorely lacking" in Harper's answers in the Commons.

On Monday, Toews committed to funding policing agreements with First Nations communities under the First Nations Policing Program for the next five years.

The Office of the Correctional Investigator is an impartial body that conducts investigations into how correctional services treats offenders in its care. Sapers, in his third consecutive term, has served in the post since 2004.

## **Hit the reset button on First Nations' finance and governance**

[Troy Media](#)

March 11, 2013

Frank Busch



WESTBANK, BC, Mar. 11, 2013/ Troy Media/ – As transparency and accountability in First Nations have taken centre stage in the Canadian public eye, many politicians and decision makers on both sides are still grasping at age-old arguments over treaties and land claims. The question is; what do we do in the here and now?

First Nations, like other Canadians, do not like being dictated to on how to run their governments or their daily lives. The Idle No More protests have shown that First Nations are opposed to the paternalistic, top-down approach used by Canadian governments historically. What would the future look like if someone were to hit the 'reset' button on the Crown-First Nation relationship and just start over?

The first thing to go would be the historically ethnocentric relationship that has made many First Nations "wards of the state," allowing both to stand on equal ground. That would mean that First Nations would be able to manage their affairs in



much the same way that all other levels of government in Canada have done since confederation. This would include the ability to access capital at wholesale rates in order to finance major infrastructure projects. How do those non-Aboriginal governments do it? They issue bonds. Could there ever be a First Nations Bond issued?

It took some brave and forward thinking First Nations a decade to have the First Nations Fiscal and Statistical Management Act, 2006 passed into legislation. This First Nations-led initiative is not a mandatory piece of legislation; it is an option for those First Nations governments that have developed their administration to the level where investors can be confident that they stand upon solid ground. It created three institutions that promote First Nations transparency and accountability nationwide.

The First Nations Financial Management Board assesses and develops financial administration under internationally recognized Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO) standards. COSO is a joint initiative of five private sector organizations dedicated to providing thought leadership through the development of frameworks and guidance on enterprise risk management, internal control and fraud deterrence.

The First Nations Tax Commission assists those First Nations which lease portions of their lands, including urban reserves, for non-native residential development and which opt to utilize property taxation of non-band members to raise revenue. They are mandated to ensure that the First Nation's tax system is administratively efficient, harmonized, improves economic growth, and is responsive to non-aboriginal on-reserve taxpayers.

The First Nations Finance Authority is the body that accesses the Capital Markets through debenture financing. It is mandated to provide low-rate loans, investment options, and capital planning advice to First Nation governments.

These organizations, working in harmony, will allow the first ever, "First Nations Bond" to be issued. While the other organizations are governed by qualified appointees, the FNFA is governed by the First Nation communities that join as Borrowing Members. Since the FNFA is a non-profit organization acting on behalf of its members, there is no mark up on the interest rates for loans. This means that member First Nations can borrow millions of dollars, pay it back over up to 30 year terms,; and pay the same interest rates available to municipal governments (currently starting as low as 2.50 per cent).

This is a real game changer for First Nations which have historically only been able to borrow at retail rates from banks. Historically, they were only able to borrow over five to eight years and pay "prime plus" interest rates. They would also have to agree to various liens against Band-owned assets and future revenues.

A good example of how this can change a community is in Membertou First Nation in Nova Scotia. Membertou was the recipient of the inaugural FNFA loan and used it to refinance their existing bank loans. The First Nation is now saving \$144k every month on what they used to pay for other loans. Those savings have been reinvested into the economy and Membertou not only has one of the lowest on-reserve unemployment rates in Canada, the First Nation is now one of the primary employers for the neighbouring municipality.

The FNFA pools all the borrowing requests of its member First Nations into a debenture. The FNFA bond to be issued in the fall of 2013 will raise an estimated \$100 million for on-reserve infrastructure. As more and more First Nations join, the future of First Nations Finance and Governance looks happy, healthy and prosperous for First Nations. The question will then become; are Canadians ready?

Frank Busch is Director of Information and Marketing with the First Nations Finance Authority.

## **Harper signs draft deal to usher in province-like powers for the Northwest Territories**

[National Post](#)

March 11, 2013

Allison Cross



*Adrian Wyld / CP files*The deal

Decisions that impact the residents of the Northwest Territories are best made by the people who live there, said Prime Minister Stephen Harper, as he announced the end of negotiations that will usher in more province-like powers for the region.

"Whenever possible, you should be making the decisions about regional

matters," Harper said in a speech in Yellowknife on Monday. "That, ladies and gentleman, is what devolution is all about."

Harper has signed a draft at the legislature that marks the end of talks to loosen the territory's ties with Ottawa, a move the PM says means the heavy lifting on the agreement, which he signed with N.W.T. Premier Bob McLeod, is done.

"We need only to look to the west to see how people flourish when they have power over their lives," Harper said.

"More than a decade ago, a devolution agreement was signed with Yukon. Since gaining jurisdiction over their land and their resources, Yukon has roared ahead."

The deal, which is still subject to public input, would put control over territorial resources in the hands of northerners for the first time.

It would also give them a big chunk of the royalties those resources produce — money that would be shared with the N.W.T.'s aboriginal governments.

Those royalties will be reinvested to bolster infrastructure, healthcare and education, Harper said.

He pointed to a separate agreement that would ensure the resources are shared appropriately with aboriginal groups.

"Before this agreement is signed finally, our government will fulfill our duty to consult with all impacted aboriginal groups," he said.

Premier McLeod called it a "day of transformation."

The signed document isn't the final version of the deal — just the final text reached by negotiators.

Devolution, which does not mean full provincial status for the territories, is expected to come into force on April 1, 2014.

Of the three northern territories, only the Yukon controls its own resources. Negotiations with Nunavut have begun, but have a long way to go.

On Monday, Harper heralded the power of the nation's north.

"Our north beckons, it challenges, it inspires and as I've said before, the north is Canada's call to greatness," he said.

## **Inuit heal and remember at Rankin Inlet qaggiq**

[Nunatsiaq Online](#)

March 11, 2013

Jane George

*Three snowhouses, including the larger qaggiq built for this past*



*week's commemoration event, "Left Behind-Never Again," for former residential school students, stand on the sea ice outside the community of Rankin Inlet. (PHOTO COURTESY OF PIITA IRNIQ)*



*Piita Irniq drum-dances inside the qaggiq built for this past week's commemoration event, "Left Behind-Never Again," in Rankin Inlet. (PHOTO COURTESY OF PIITA IRNIQ)*



*Levina Brown, a former residential school student, Nunavut MLA and cabinet minister, tends a qulliq inside the qaggiq built for this week's commemoration event for residential school survivors in Rankin Inlet. (PHOTO COURTESY OF PIITA IRNIQ)*





*Former residential school students Piita Irniq, Levina Brown and Jack Anawak take time to share their stories with Rankin Inlet students during this past week's commemoration event, "Left Behind-Never Again," for former residential school students. (PHOTO COURTESY OF PIITA IRNIQ)*

Piita Irniq drum-dances inside the huge qaggiq snowhouse in Rankin Inlet built for last week's "Left Behind-Never Again" gathering for former residential school students.

You can always learn to drum, not matter what age you are, Irniq said he wants to remind others.

As a young boy, more than 50 years ago, far from his home

near today's community of Repulse Bay, at Lyons Bay or Naujaarjuat (a place of plentiful seagull fledglings), Irniq had little chance to learn Inuit traditional songs or drumming.

Instead, shipped out for months at a time, Irniq, now 65, attended three residential schools: in Chesterfield Inlet from 1957 to 1963, Yellowknife in 1963-64, and Churchill in 1964-65.

At Chesterfield's Inlet school, run by Oblate priests and Grey Nuns, Irniq lived at Turquetil Hall, the residence for the Sir Joseph Bernier School.

This was the most infamous residential school in the eastern Arctic, where Irniq, along with many other young Inuit, suffered physical and sexual abuse.

For Irniq, his school days there included sexual abuse from a Grey Nun, being "severely punished," and a stream of verbal abuse from an Oblate brother who used to tell his students they were just "bloody dodos."

Former residential school students first gathered in Chesterfield Inlet in 1993 to talk about those experiences, marking the beginning of public disclosures by former Inuit students across Nunavut.

The healing process continued last week in Rankin Inlet at the event, organized by Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre's Kivalliq Counseling and Support Services, along

with former residential students who included Irniq, former Nunavut MP and Arctic Ambassador Jack Anawak, and Levinia Brown, a former Nunavut MLA and minister.

So many words, with so much wisdom, so much knowledge and pain, Irniq reflected as the week-long event wrapped up.

But that's okay, Irniq said, because telling about pain is healing.

A man, now in his 70s — more than 50 years after he was abused at residential school — finally managed to talk about the experience of being sexually abused by an Oblate brother.

For years, that man had been in a "very big pain," Irniq said.

"I am so sorry, that I revealed it," the man told Irniq.

But Irniq told him, "no, you shouldn't be. It is good that you reveal here because from this day you are going to heal. You will be a healthier person in the end."

Openness and healing can win over pain and trauma, Irniq believes.

In the qaggiq, and during discussions at the healing circles, Irniq and the other former residential school students reclaimed "our culture for ourselves and for our grandchildren's children," he said.

"We are who we have always been," Irniq said.

The idea behind the Rankin Inlet gathering, called "Left Behind-Never Again," was to take back "what we have lost," so that no one will "left behind, never again," as Irniq and others were for many years.

During the week, Irniq, Anawak, Brown and the other former residential school students also talked about their experiences with school children, meeting them at their schools and inside the igloos, built by local elders.

The kids were eager to know more about the former students' residential experience, Irniq said. They wanted to know how old he and the others were when they left home and why and how they were punished.

At the opening ceremonies, the contribution of public servant and whistleblower Marius Tungilik, [who died last December at 55](#), was also recognized.

Tungilik's disclosures about sexual abuse at the Sir Joseph Bernier residential school in the early 1990s led to a cascade of other disclosures and eventually, an apology from the church.

In July 1993, Tungilik, Irniq and Anawak, all from Repulse Bay, organized the first Chesterfield Inlet school reunion where Bishop Reynald Rouleau made his first apology to the residential school students.

But a lot has happened since then — more apologies for the residential schools from the Roman Catholic church and Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

The federal government also established a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a result of the 2007 Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement.

To recognize Tungilik, his daughter, Tanya Tungilik, accepted a plaque saying: "Left Behind-Never Again, Honouring those from Rankin Inlet."

Other Kivalliq communities will receive similar plaques to honour the former residential students from their communities, Irniq said.

Irniq, a former Northwest Territories MLA, Nunavut deputy minister and first Commissioner of Nunavut, who like many other residential students achieved great professional success, knows "where we have been and where we are going."

And for Canadians, it's also important to continue hearing about the residential school experience "because they have a duty and a responsibility to know."

"People need to know about this because the residential school experience is everyone's responsibility," he said.



*Former residential school students hold healing circles in Rankin Inlet during this past week's commemoration event. (PHOTO COURTESY OF PIITA IRNIQ)*



## **A Tribe Called Red Brings Its Electric Pow Wow to Your Hood**

[ABC News](#)

March 11, 2013

Monika Fabian

This Trio Brings You Electronic Music, Native American Singing and Hip Hop

Among the best acts to catch this spring concert season is [A Tribe Called Red](#), a trio of aboriginal DJ-producers from Canada whose specialty is a kinetic mix of electronic dance music and traditional Native American singing and drumming dubbed "Pow Wow Step." The group regularly incorporates visuals into their show that splice and deconstruct pop-culture references to Native Americans in order to reclaim the images and draw attention to the often-racist depictions. Their [17-city stateside tour](#) begins on March 12 in Denver, and includes stops at [SXSW in Austin](#), [No Jazz Fest](#) in New Orleans and [Movement Festival](#) in Detroit.

I recently saw Tribe one frigid January night in New York City's East Village, where they brought a bit of their world to the annual global music showcase known as globalFEST. Throughout their set, [deejays NDN](#), [Shub](#) and [Bear Witness](#) scratched and looped dancehall, dubstep and moombahton into songs like Northern Cree's "Red-Skin Girl" and "Cherokee People, Cherokee Pride" by Paul Revere & The Raiders. They were accompanied by friends Rhonda and Winter Doxtator, a mother-daughter duo that contributed traditional Native American vocals and a [hoop dance in native regalia](#). The globalFEST performance seamlessly wedded contemporary and traditional elements, and it embodied Tribe's mission: to express who aboriginal people are today.

Tribe emerged from a monthly party organized by members Ian "DJ NDN" Campeau, 31, an Ojibway from Nipissing First Nation, and Bear Witness, 35, from Six Nations reserve, in their hometown, Ottawa. The goal of their "Electric Pow Wow" gathering was to create a space to showcase urban Native talent and culture. In 2009, hip-hop producer and turntable battling champ Dan "DJ Shub" General, 31, also from Six Nations reserve, was invited to perform at one party. He joined DJ NDN and Bear Witness in Tribe soon after.

Over the past few years, the act has gained wider popularity in and out of Canada. In 2012, its self-titled full-length debut was long-listed for the prestigious Polaris Music Prize and landed on the Washington Post year-end Best Of list.



I caught up with A Tribe Called Red the day after their New York show and talked to them about their music, the Native-rights movement [Idle No More](#) and what's next for them.

Monika Fabian: What's your music-making process like?

DJ NDN: Dan knows how to work the programming because he's been producing hip-hop for so long, so we sit down around him and we all kind of be like, "Alright, change this, do this. Alright that doesn't sound so good, try this." So we all have a hand in producing the track, but he knows the ins and outs. DJ Shub: It's a lot easier than back when I was doing it by myself [in the beginning]. It's like I have two minds talking to me at the same time.

How did you incorporate the visual aspect to the group, Bear? Bear Witness: I've been a media artist for 10 years now. My work has always been really music-driven, music-based. Before it was always about finding music that worked with what I was trying to do visually. So when Tribe started, it was kind of like a no-brainer. And bringing that into a club environment came out of my interest in deejaying. It was something that I hadn't really done much of before but I had some experiences with. Once we started the parties and they were taking off, it was just another aspect that we could add to it. When you create more socially conscious tracks like "The Road" or "[Woodcarver](#)", [about an unarmed Native American man and seventh generation wood carver killed by a Seattle police officer], do you have a different mindset than with your other songs, or does it all come from the same place?

DJ NDN: Well, "Woodcarver" came out of extreme frustration. When I saw the [dashboard-camera] video, I cried. Like I was super upset but I was like, "At least it got caught on video and this guy's gonna get what's coming to him [...] He's gonna get the book thrown at him 'cause there's video this time." And he got let off. And then that's when we said something has to be done. And that's what came out of that.

"The Road," on the other hand, we already had that track. I felt the spirit of what was happening [and all this craziness with Idle No More](#) that it'd fit perfect. What are your thoughts on Idle No More?

DJ NDN: It's a civil-rights movement that's never been done yet for Canadian aboriginals. Super important. Needs to be done. There's going to be lots of growing

pains. There already is. It's bringing out all of this racism. Like rain does to a lawn and worms come out, that's what it's done to racism. It's pretty crazy. But it needs to be done— Bear: There's been an ongoing civil-rights movement as far as aboriginal people go. It's just we're becoming stronger and that's where things are at. DJ NDN: And organized. Bear: Well it's been organized as well. DJ NDN: Yeah but not that quickly. You couldn't tweet "Yo, there's gonna be a flash mob in two hours, everybody come out" and then it happens. Shub: Social media has definitely played a huge part. So do you see yourselves as organizers with your music?

DJ NDN: Of the movement, no. Bear: We've always used Tribe as a way to raise awareness of aboriginal people and who we are now—who we are as contemporary people. So we could continue to use Tribe in that same way around what's happening in Ottawa and what's happening with aboriginal people around the world. Your new EP, "Trapline," is more hip-hop oriented. Was that a deliberate decision or did you step back afterward and notice it? DJ NDN: That's kind of how it was. We had it already made—different edits of different tracks. [We] just wanted to go into the trap scene, you know what I mean? Just like that whole trap style got pretty hot pretty quick so with all these trap edits we just kind of had them and was like, "We should kind of put them out there somewhere somehow." Bear: It's also just the way production, media, and music's going right now. It used to be you were a jungle producer or a house producer and that's what you did and you spent all your time just crafting that one sound. Now it's more about different sounds that come up to be like the sound of the moment but it's about your own personal flavor that you put on that. You've collaborated with other DJ/producers, like Mexico's Javier Estrada, in the past. Who else have you worked with? What other collaborations stand out for you?

DJ NDN: We have a track with Das Racist. I think we're sitting on the last Das Racist track ever right now, which is pretty crazy. We sent them a beat and they sent it back with their verses on it—Heems and Kool A.D.'s verses—and then they broke up. It was like days before they announced the break-up.

We remixed Nelly Furtado. Again, they're kind of just sitting on that too. They haven't put it out yet either.

Bear: That's one of our major projects right now: working on a more collaborative project, mostly with other aboriginal artists. The people who've kind of become our family over the past few years. Like who? Who should people know more about?

NDN: [Wab Kinew](#). Even though everybody knows Wab Kinew as being this anchor and almost ambassador for First Nations people to non-First Nation people in Canada. He's hosted a bunch of shows on the relationship between First Nations and non-First Nations people in Canada. He was like a CBC reporter.

He did all kinds of stuff but he's a rapper and he was one of the first native rappers that I ever heard that made me proud about being First Nation in Canada. He was in a group called "Dead Indians" in the '90s. Who are you listening to these days?

NDN: It depends on where I am. If I'm in the house, I'm listening to the CBC. I don't know, I guess the whole trap scene. You gotta keep your ear to the ground. Angel Haze--I'm listening to her a lot. Got turned on to her the last time we were here. Blew me away.

Shub: "Gangnam Style." [Everyone laughs.] This track you've probably never heard of yet. My son loves that song, knows every dance move to that song, so that's all I hear. I love it.

Bear: It's too bad because it used to be Michael Jackson and he'd dance and now it's "Gangnam Style." I came into music as a fan. But the further I've gone into [making] music, the less I listen to it for pleasure. So I just get really focused into certain aspects of music when I'm DJing. Right now, it's the part of the EDM trap scene that's gone more melodic, and it's like trap love songs. Give me an example.

NDN: That Kito remix— Bear: Kito is awesome in general. NDN: That Kito remix of Jay Z and Kanye's "[Who Gon Stop Me?](#)"

What's next for you all?

Shub: We're just working on the new album. We have two albums coming out: one, hopefully, that's coming out in the spring and then one that's coming out in the fall. Doing a couple of local shows that so that we can focus on the album. Is it a huge priority for you all to keep making music and putting out albums?

Bear: Definitely to constantly be making music. At first, we never thought about putting out an album. We made tracks, put them on SoundCloud, made a video and put it in on YouTube. We never thought further than that. It was our manager, Guillaume Decouflet, who was like "You guys have to make this an album." And that really changed stuff for us.

Once there was a package that people could talk about, could be reviewed, could be put on lists and charts; that changed everything for us. So even though we're not charging for the album, it still an object that people can talk about. I think that's the use of an album now.

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## Ottawa loses another bid to keep First Nations child-welfare case out of courts

[CTV News](#)

Mar. 11, 2013 4:45PM EDT



*First Nations Idle No More protesters hold hands and dance in a circle during a demonstration at the Douglas-Peace Arch crossing on the Canada-U.S. border near Surrey, B.C., on Saturday, Jan. 5, 2013. (Darryl Dyck / THE CANADIAN PRESS)*

OTTAWA - The federal government has suffered another blow in its bid to keep a high-stakes battle over First Nations child welfare out of the courts.

The Federal Court of Appeal has sided with First Nations child-rights advocates who claim that Ottawa is short-changing native communities by under-funding child-welfare services.

The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society and the Assembly of First Nations launched a human-rights challenge that dates back to 2007.

But Ottawa has argued that the case should not be heard at all because it's not fair to compare federal programs with provincial programs.

Federal officials also say they have been putting more money into First Nations child welfare and reorienting their programs to focus on keeping families together.

After much wrangling and millions of dollars in legal fees, the Federal Court rejected the government's arguments, ordering a full hearing at the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal.

The government appealed the Federal Court's decision. On Monday, the Federal Court of Appeal upheld the Federal Court's decision.



Ottawa still has the option of asking the Supreme Court of Canada to hear its appeal.

Meanwhile, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal began its hearings late last month.

Billions of dollars are at stake. If First Nations complainants win the case, Ottawa would likely be required to fund social services on reserves at the same level per capita as the provinces fund similar services off reserves.

## **Province signs \$85-million funding deal with Métis settlements**

[Edmonton Journal](#)

March 12, 2013

Karen Kleiss



*Alberta has signed a 10-year, \$85-million funding agreement with Alberta's eight Métis settlements. "The goal of the agreement is to ensure that Métis Settlements can be self-sustaining," Premier Alison Redford said during a signing ceremony at Government House Tuesday. Photograph by: Jeff McIntosh, file, CP*

EDMONTON - The provincial government has signed a 10-year, \$85-million funding agreement with Alberta's eight Métis settlements.

The long-term governance and funding agreement aims to establish a new fiscal relationship with the settlements, reducing their dependence on provincial funding.

"The goal of the agreement is to ensure that Métis Settlements can be self-sustaining," Premier Alison Redford said during a signing ceremony at Government House.

"This is our investment in the growth of healthy and prosperous communities across the province."

Randy Hardy, president of the Métis Settlements General Council, said the money will help the settlements provide services on par with those in surrounding communities.

"It marks an historic day in the long-standing partnership between the Government of Alberta and the Métis settlements," Hardy said in a statement.

"These arrangements allow us to make great strides toward achieving long-term sustainability for our settlement communities."

Nearly 5,000 Métis live on Alberta's eight settlements, which are comprised of 512,121 hectares (1.25 million acres) in east-central and northern Alberta.

More to come ...

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## **Ottawa still blocking UN Indigenous peoples rapporteur from landing in Canada on official visit**

[APTN National News](#)

March 13 2013

Jorge Barrera



*OTTAWA—The Harper government continues to prevent the UN special rapporteur on Indigenous peoples from visiting Canada.*



James Anaya, the special rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous peoples, says the federal government continues to ignore his year-old request to visit Canada to investigate the "human rights situation of Indigenous peoples," according to a Feb. 20 letter he sent to the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC).

"I have communicated with the government of Canada to request its consent for me to conduct an official visit to the country to examine and report on the human rights situation of Indigenous peoples there," writes Anaya, in the letter. "I initially made the request in February of 2012 and am still awaiting a response from the government."

Anaya has written the federal government at least three times requesting permission to visit the country.

Anaya says in the letter that Canada has issued "a standing invitation" to special rapporteurs that hold mandates from the UN Human Rights Council, but he can't enter the country on an official visit without the formal consent of Ottawa that would include an agreement on dates and terms of the visit.

Anaya says he will find a way to meet with First Nations leaders through unofficial channels if the government continues to ignore his request.

"If I do not receive a positive response from the government in the coming months, I can explore ways of meeting with First Nations leaders from Canada outside the context of an official visit," writes Anaya.

Anaya's letter came in response to an invitation from Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, president of the UBCIC.

Anaya's term ends in May 2014.

Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt's office did not immediately return a request for comment.

## **Too few aboriginals working at Muskrat Falls, group says**

[CBC News](#)

Mar 13, 2013 4:07 PM NT



*Muskrat Falls, Labrador. (CBC)*

A group tasked to train aboriginal workers for jobs at Muskrat Falls thinks not enough of their grads are being hired.

Nalcor Energy's latest statistics show that aboriginals from Labrador account for eight per cent of

workers at the construction site.

Keith Jacque is the executive director of the Labrador Aboriginal Training Partnership. He said while hundreds of aboriginals are ready to work, only a small percentage have been hired.

"I don't know if it's a process of some subcontractors not knowing we're here, or not knowing what aboriginals are out there, but it's no trouble to hear around town about the number of people coming into the area — and yet there are a number of aboriginals here ready, willing and able to work," said Jacque.

About 500 people from the three aboriginal groups in Labrador have already trained.

Jacque said he will challenge any claim that Innu, Inuit and Nunatukavut workers aren't available.

"For any person to come to Labrador and say that there's no aboriginal ready or there's very few, you know then I would have to contest that, you know, for the training that's going on here in Labrador."

This week, people in Natuashish are getting a heads-up about working at Muskrat Falls. Nalcor's Innu employment and training team is letting people in the community know about the opportunities available, and is encouraging those who qualify to register on a Muskrat Falls job database.

According to the hiring protocol under the Impacts and Benefits Agreement signed between Nalcor and the Innu Nation, aboriginal Labradorians are to be given priority for jobs.

Jacque said there are a number of success stories out there.

"They might not be well known, but there are people who are LATP trained that are working on the [Muskrat Falls] site and are doing exceptionally well," Jacque added.

Two training programs are scheduled to begin on March 25 and on April 8, with two more planned for June.